

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 IO-13 CIAE-00  
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05  
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00  
/103 W

-----060817 101541Z /53

P R 101400Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3049  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
LONDON 4216  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AQXBASSY MOSCOW 1797  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
USUN NEW YORK 5668  
USMISSION SINAI  
USCINCEUR

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PEPR, IS, US  
SUBJECT: PERES PREFERS REGIONAL PACT TO BILATERAL ALLIANCE WITH U.S.

REF: A) TEL AVIV 5581, B) TEL AVIV 5007, C) TEL AVIV A-65,  
D) TEL AVIV 4941

1. IN A MAY 5 ARTICLE IN MAARIV, ALIGNMENT LEADER SHIMON  
PERES ARGUED THAT A REGIONAL PACT WITH THE U.S. PARTICIPATING  
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WAS PREFERABLE TO A BILATERAL ISRAEL-U.S. DEFENSE TREATY.

2. ACCORDING TO PERES:  
-- A BILATERAL PACT WOULD STRENGTHEN ISRAEL'S DETERRENCE  
POWER AT THE COST OF ISRAELI INDEPENDENCE. A TREATY BETWEEN  
UNEQUAL POWERS SUCH AS THE U.S. AND ISRAEL WOULD MAKE THE  
LATTER A U.S. SATELLITE. THE U.S. WOULD WANT TO KNOW IN

ADVANCE IDF MILITARY DISPOSITIONS AND STRATEGIC CONCEPTIONS, THE SUBSTANCE OF EVERY OPERATION BEFOREHAND AND THE RIGHT TO GIVE "ADVICE."

-- A BILATERAL PACT IS MEANT TO FACILITATE THE SIGNING OF A PEACE AGREEMENT AND HAS A TERRITORIAL PRICE. IT WOULD BE CONTINGENT UPON ISRAEL'S AGREEMENT TO WITHDRAW TO THE 1967 BORDERS WITH MINOR CHANGES.

-- A BILATERAL PACT WOULD WEAKEN CONGRESSIONAL AND U.S. PUBLIC SUPPORT OF ISRAEL BECAUSE OF AMERICAN RESERVATIONS ABOUT ADDITIONAL U.S. COMMITMENTS. IF AMERICAN TROOPS BECOME INVOLVED IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THE BLAME WILL, CONSCIOUSLY OR UNCONSCIOUSLY, BE PLACED ON ISRAEL.

-- A BILATERAL PACT IS OF QUESTIONABLE EFFECTIVENESS. IN CASE OF SURPRISE ATTACK IT IS DOUBTFUL THE U.S. EXECUTIVE/ CONGRESSIONAL SYSTEM COULD ACT FAST ENOUGH. SUCH A PACT HAS NO RELEVANCE TO TERRORISM. NEITHER WOULD IT PLAY AN EFFECTIVE ROLE IN A WAR OF ATTRITION.

-- A BILATERAL ISRAEL-U.S. DEFENSE TREATY WOULD OPEN NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR THE SOVIET UNION SINCE MOSCOW MIGHT OFFER PARALLEL PACTS TO THE ARAB STATES.

-- A BILATERAL PACT WILL STAND IN THE WAY OF ISRAEL'S ACHIEVING GOOD RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS WITHOUT A PERMANENT BUFFER OF FOREIGN ARMIES.

3. AS AN ALTERNATIVE, PERES SUGGESTED A REGIONAL PACT WITH THE U.S. PARTICIPATING AS A FULL MEMBER. SUCH A PACT COULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BE ESTABLISHED AFTER A PEACE AGREEMENT IS CONCLUDED WITH THE ARAB STATES. THE ADVANTAGE OF THIS APPROACH IS THAT THE QUESTION OF BORDERS WOULD BE SETTLED ACCORDING TO THE SPECIFIC SECURITY NEEDS OF THE STATES INVOLVED, WITHOUT THE CONSIDERATION OF IRRELEVANT EXTERNAL GUARANTEES. ACCORDING TO PERES, A REGIONAL PACT WOULD

-- DETER MILITARY INTERVENTION FROM OUTSIDE THE MIDDLE EAST;

-- PREVENT AGGRESSION BY ONE MIDDLE EASTERN MEMBER OF THE PACT AGAINST ANOTHER; AND

-- OPEN UP NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION.

HOWEVER, AT THIS STAGE OF THE PEACE PROCESS, PERES BELIEVED THE MAIN TASK TO BE THE CONSLUCION OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT. ONLY THEN WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE TO CONSIDER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL TREATY SYSTEM.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH GOVERNMENT MINISTERS HAVE DECLINED TO ADDRESS IN PUBLIC THE QUESTION OF A BILATERAL SECURITY TREATY WITH THE U.S., IN PRIVATE DAYAN (REF D) AND CHAIRMAN ARENS OF THE KNESSET SECURITY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (REF C) HAVE LOOKED FAVORABLY UPON SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT. IN THE ALIGNMENT, EBAN (REF A) HAS ALSO SUGGESTED THAT A BILATERAL TREATY COULD BE A POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT. PERES, HOWEVER,

HAS ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW. IN HIS ARTICLE, HE IS CLEARLY TRYING TO MAKE A BILATERAL PACT APPEAR AS UNATTRACTIVE AS POSSIBLE; HIS PURPOSE IS TO DECOUPLE SUCH A TREATY FROM CONSIDERATION OF THE ISRAELI SECURITY REQUIREMENTS WHICH MUST BE MET IN ANY PEACE SETTLEMENT. IN HIS VIEW, CONSIDERATION OF A BILATERAL TREATY DURING NEGOTIATIONS WOULD ONLY DECREASE ISRAEL'S ABILITY TO OBTAIN MORE SIGNIFICANT GUARANTEES SUCH AS DEFENSIBLE BORDERS. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT PERES WILL CHANGE HIS LINE ON THE SUBJECT OF A BILATERAL DEFENSE TREATY WITH THE U.S. UNTIL A SETTLEMENT WITH EGYPT BEGINS TO TAKE FORM.

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